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Transmitted via Email

January 11, 2005

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 250-5-7

SUBJECT: FNM – TRAVEL MANAGEMENT CENTER (TMC)

Purpose. To provide guidance on TMC.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2005.

Beginning January 1, 2005, the Natural Resources Conservation Service will utilize Electronic Data Systems (EDS) for Travel Management Center (TMC) Services for all expiring TMC contracts; i.e., Sato Travel. EDS will begin processing new reservations and issuing tickets effective January 1, 2005, for expired TMC contracts only. For TMC contracts expiring after December 31, 2004, travelers will continue to use their existing TMC until the contract expires. When the *old* TMC contract expires, EDS becomes the TMC contractor.

Since Minnesota's Sato Travel contract expires August 14, 2005, we can continue to use their service in obtaining airline reservations. Since this date is the cutoff for issuing tickets, it does not mean the travel has to be completed by then. Therefore, if you have to travel September 5-8 to New Orleans, **as long as your ticket is issued by August 14, you do not need to use EDS. After August 14, EDS must be utilized.**

The travel authorization and vouchering process will remain the same until we go *live* with eTravel effective January 1, 2006. When we go *live*, the authorizations and vouchers will be done through EDS. This new current process is a *bridge* process only until we go *live*. **As stated above, airline reservations can be made via Sato Travel until August 14, 2005. After that, OBE must be used.**

NRCS travelers have the option of logging onto EDS Online Booking Engine (OBE) at www.FedTraveler.com and booking reservations using the **Self Service Process** or using the **Full Service Process**. **We strongly encourage travelers to use the self service process as much as possible to obtain maximum savings.**

Full Service Process

- USDA/NRCS Travelers will have an option to access full service to the [FedTraveler.com](http://www.FedTraveler.com) via the toll number (866) 876-8020. **The Fee for this service is \$27.09 per transaction.** The Full Service Process will allow the traveler to request travel arrangements via a travel agent. The travel agent will be able to view profile information and assist with travel arrangements. During this process, the travel agent will request the traveler's authorization

numbers and other pertinent information, i.e. if charge is to Centrally Billed Account (CBA) the agent will ask for 4 digit accounting station code and 7 digit accounting code. Emergency travel requirements also will be handled through (866) 876-8020.

Self Service Process

- FedTraveler.com provides the Online Booking Engine (OBE) and travel agent support That USDA/NRCS will use for its official travel needs. **The fee for this service is \$11.00 per transaction.** To enter FedTraveler.com for the first time, USDA/NRCS travelers will use their existing eAuthentication User ID and password (credentials). USDA/NRCS travelers without existing credentials should receive their User ID and password via email by December 23, 2004.

An initial data file containing profiles for all USDA/NRCS employee travelers were provided to Electronic Data Systems (EDS) by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. USDA/NRCS travelers will access the [FedTraveler.com](http://www.FedTraveler.com) OBE via the <http://www.FedTraveler.com> web page. The traveler will then be prompted, at the organizer page, to update and add preferences to their profile (information already loaded includes name, email address, credit card number, expiration date, and card type). After updating the profile, the traveler can make their reservations by selecting Online Booking.

As of December 29, 2004, employees should have received an email advising of their User ID. Your password will be provided to you in a second email. Travelers who are unaware of their credentials or new employees needing credentials need to contact the State Office Finance Management Department to initiate action to obtain eAuthentication User ID and password.

For current information on EDS, review <http://my.nrcs.usda.gov> bulletin board. Questions may be directed to Mary Jo Polunc, Budget Officer, at 651-602-7860.

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State Conservationist

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